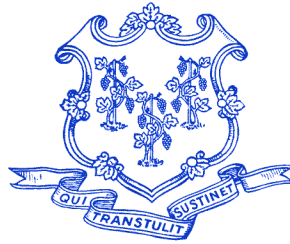


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State of Connecticut

SENATE

Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff

Testimony in Support of

Senate Bill 244: *An Act Concerning Eligibility to Hold Public Office or Be Employed by the State or Any Municipality*

and

Senate Bill 1191: *An Act Prohibiting the Use of a Certain Application, Software and Programs on State Government Devices and Requiring Minimum Security Standards and Annual Audits of Such Devices*

Government Administration and Elections Committee

March 10, 2023

Senator Flexer, Representative Blumenthal, Senator Sampson, Representative Mastrofrancesco and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, I would like to thank you today for allowing me to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 244: *An Act Concerning Eligibility to Hold Public Office or Be Employed by the State or Any Municipality* and Senate Bill 1191: *An Act Prohibiting the Use of a Certain Application, Software and Programs on State Government Devices and Requiring Minimum Security Standards and Annual Audits of Such Devices*.

The January 6, 2021 insurrection was an event unlike anything we have ever seen in the United States, the wholesale siege and attack on the United States Capitol by American citizens. Even during the American Civil War this did not happen. Only once before, during the War of 1812 was the Capitol attacked like this and that was by the British Army. **Senate Bill 244** seeks to take Section 3 of the XIV Amendment to the United States Constitution and codify it into Connecticut state statute. If adopted, this section would bar anyone who previously swore an oath as an elected official or a member of a police department and is then convicted of insurrection or rebellion from standing for election in Connecticut. No one who has sought the destruction of our democracy should be allowed into a position where they can undermine the innerworkings of government. These people, once they serve the penalty handed down by a court should be allowed to continue living their lives, but they cannot be allowed to run for election to the very entity which they sought to destroy. They would be able to undermine the government from the inside. Unfortunately, on January 6th there were numerous examples of state representatives and state senators, municipal police officers and others who took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States of America who ignored and violated that oath.

The second section of this bill seeks to address employment and adds the charge of sedition or seditious-conspiracy as an additional exclusionary offense. In seditious-conspiracy cases

prosecutors must prove that two or more people conspired to "overthrow, put down or to destroy by force" the U.S. government or bring war against it, or that they plotted to use force to oppose the authority of the government or to block the execution of a law. This is no small charge. Again, this bill seeks to keep people who worked to destroy the government from serving as an employee of the government they sought to destroy.

The second bill that I would like to testify in favor of today is **Senate Bill 1191**. You don't need to be a member of Generation Z to know what TikTok is. A social media app, mostly used on smart phones, its presence is everywhere among the younger generations of our society. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has repeatedly pointed out the danger that this application poses to government entities because of allegations that the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist Party have been using the application to collect data on American citizens. The United States House of Representatives and the Executive Branch of the federal government have both banned this application from their respective government devices. As of this week the United States Senate is considering a bipartisan bill that would give the President the power to ban TikTok in the United States. Connecticut government should follow suit with the House and the Executive branch and ban it on state devices.

TikTok is just the latest of alleged foreign controlled devices or applications that we have been warned about. Kaspersky Labs software has had allegations of giving the Russian Federation access to our computers and Lenovo computers, that we ourselves use in the Connecticut General Assembly, has also been accused of being compromised by the Chinese government. It is important that our technology staff in state government are aware of and investigate the allegations, are talking to one another and are being proactive about taking steps to protect our citizens' information and data from nefarious foreign actors. This is why Section 2 of the bill requires the technology staffs within the executive, legislative and judicial branches to talk, assess and take action. They are required to work together to ensure that the software, apps and devices that state government is using is safe.

This bill is not directed at any one entity. This bill is aimed at protecting highly precious data that the state possesses. If a foreign actor is able to obtain data from our devices, they might as well have stolen the device itself. In some respects, this might even be worse than physically stealing the device, because you may never know that the theft has taken place.

I thank the committee for your time and ask that you give Senate Bills 244 and 1191 favorable reports. I look forward to working with you as these bills go through the process.